

us a vote on expanded energy resources, whether it is drilling, whether it is alternative resources—wind, solar, nuclear, refinery capacity, and day after day they say no.

In just a few weeks, our children, who have been riding buses safely, are now going to have to alter the way they get to school.

Mr. Speaker, time is up. It's time for us to vote on the American Energy Act. Let's vote on it today. Let's vote on it before we go on our August break. Let's give the American people relief on gas prices.

GAS PRICES

(Mr. HALL of New York asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HALL of New York. Mr. Speaker, gas prices in New York are still at the outrageous price of \$4.19, well above what working families in the Hudson Valley can bear. They are looking to us in the government for answers, and Congress needs to respond.

The fact is that the Democratic majority has advanced a wide variety of proposals to provide relief. We have pushed tax credits for fuel-efficient vehicles and renewables, we've called for Big Oil to drill on its land that it has already leased and gotten permits for, and advocated a release from the SPR. Each time President Bush and his allies have opposed these measures and are holding real energy solutions hostage to their insistence on old, ineffective drilling proposals.

The Republican minority treats our energy crisis like a multiple choice question. The problem is that they keep answering "none of the above." On this side of the aisle, we will keep pushing solutions to responsibly enhance American energy supplies and usher in an innovative and independent energy future.

I hope that after the break our friends on the other side of the aisle will come back to Congress ready to cooperate instead of standing in the way.

AMERICA NEEDS COMPREHENSIVE ENERGY REFORM

(Mr. LATTA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. LATTA. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to represent the ninth largest manufacturing district of the United States Congress. Earlier this week, I had the pleasure of visiting two manufacturing facilities in my district.

During the visits, the management of each facility told me that the number one issue facing them is the rising cost of energy and petroleum products.

Natural gas is a much-needed resource in the manufacturing industry to fuel production, in addition to the thousands of petroleum-based products that are used to fabricate various goods.

Without comprehensive energy reform, the price of oil and natural gas will continue to rise here in the United States, forcing costs to rise, and leaving us at a competitive disadvantage with the rest of the world. Foreign manufacturers located in countries such as India and China are allowing for exploration and recovery of their domestic natural resources that keep their energy prices low.

The bottom line is that energy equals manufacturing which equals jobs. And without comprehensive energy reform, our Nation will continue to lose business to these countries and our economy will continue to suffer. The time to act is now.

COMPREHENSIVE IMMIGRATION REFORM

(Mr. BACA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. BACA. Mr. Speaker, we are a Nation with a Constitution and a Bill of Rights, with human rights; and that's what makes our country so great.

These rights were violated for hundreds of families in immigration raids throughout the country, including Postville, Iowa. What we fail to see at times are the long-lasting and devastating impact raids leave behind.

In Postville, hundreds of children have been ripped from their families, elderly left to fend for themselves, single parents forced to wear ankle bracelets are prohibited from working to feed their children. And the schools now resemble ghost towns with the absence of so many children.

We cannot continue to look the other way and ignore what is happening in this country.

The human dignity of these families have been stepped on. We are a country with moral principles and core family values. There is no blanket solution for the immigration crisis. We need to look beyond this ugly anti-immigrant rhetoric that is dividing our Nation and work towards comprehensive immigration reform.

213 VOTE TO GET OUT OF DODGE

(Mr. POE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. POE. Mr. Speaker, it was 213 to get out of town and it was 212 to stay here and do our job, which is to pass an energy bill for Americans. So the 213 that won this vote, at the end of the day tomorrow they're getting out of town. But you see, back home where I live, people can't even leave town because they don't have enough money to pay for gasoline for their vehicles.

It's a shame on Congress that we are going in recess when we have to deal and have not dealt with the issue of high energy prices.

So let's bring a vote up today on whether we should drill offshore or not. Let Congress decide—no politics, up or

down vote—whether we should drill offshore and get America back to work by lowering gasoline prices. That's what we need to do rather than get out of Dodge—or should I say Washington, DC.

And that's just the way it is.

VETERANS TRAVEL PROGRAM REFORM ACT

(Mr. WALZ of Minnesota asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. WALZ of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to introduce a new bill, the Veterans Travel Program Reform Act of 2008. I'm proud to be joined by my colleague from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) in introducing this legislation.

Many of our veterans incur significant costs traveling to and from VA facilities to receive their health care treatment. This is especially true because of skyrocketing gas prices, and it's a big problem in rural areas like southern Minnesota.

While some veterans are reimbursed for their travel, the rate they receive is way below what Members of this body receive when we travel in our cars. That is simply wrong. What's more, current law requires the VA Secretary to raise the deductible that veterans have to pay when the mileage reimbursement goes up.

Many of our veterans travel—and travel long distances—and end up paying for it out of their own pocket. This bill would fix these problems by making it more generous and fair in the reimbursement. It would set the mileage rate at the same rate that other Members of Congress and other Federal employees receive. It would eliminate the deductible, and it would eliminate the restrictions on eligibility so more of our veterans would be able to receive that.

Mr. Speaker, our veterans served us, now it's time we serve them. I urge my colleagues to join me.

CONGRESS SHOULD DO ITS JOB AND VOTE ON ENERGY

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Yesterday, by one vote, the House voted to adjourn as soon as today for the August recess. This means Congress is about to take a 5-week vacation without even taking a vote on bipartisan measures that would lessen our dependence on foreign oil by allowing more domestic drilling on the Outer Continental Shelf.

Mr. Speaker, the American people won't get a vacation from high gasoline prices, so Congress shouldn't take a vacation until we vote to lessen our dependence on foreign oil.

If the Speaker won't keep the House in session to allow this vote, I urge President Bush to call an immediate